

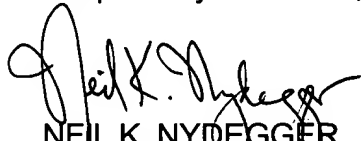
REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner has indicated that claims 1, 4, 5, 8-15, 18, 20, and 26 are allowed. Further, the Examiner has rejected claim 27 as being anticipated by Joutras, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,954,621), and has rejected claims 27 and 28 for being unpatentable over Bernstein (U.S. Patent No. 5,037,088) in view of Joutras, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,954,621) and Ferber (U.S. Patent No. 5,445,581).

In response to the Office Action, independent claim 27 and dependent claim 28 have been canceled. No new matter has been added. Claims 1, 4, 5, 8-15, 18, 20 and 26 remain pending. Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1, 4, 5, 8-15, 18, 20 and 26 are patentable, and that the application is now in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, an early notice of allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at 619-688-1300 for any reason that would advance the instant application to issue.

Dated this 17<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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